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NEW YORK TIMES

Russians Seize Defector Aboard Coast Guard Ship

By ROBERT D. McFADDEN

At 2 P.M. last Monday, as the mother ship of a Soviet fishing fleet and a United States Coast Guard cutter rocked in the swells a mile off Martha's Vineyard, a Lithuanian seaman made a dramatic leap for political asylum.

The seaman, a radio operator known here only as Simas, hurled himself across a 10-foot gap from the Soviet vessel, the Sovietskaja Litva, and onto the deck of the cutter Vigilant.

About 10 hours later, after a flurry of ship-to-shore radio consultations, the seaman was forcibly returned to the fishing ship by Soviet crewmen who had boarded the American vessel with the permission of the Coast Guard. The man, according to eyewitness accounts, was severely beaten by the Russians while the American seamen looked on.

Demonstrations Held

"Simas pleaded with [the Americans] to let him stay," a civilian who was aboard the cutter and witnessed the beating said yesterday. He added:

"He was crying 'help' and was on his knees praying and begging them to save his life. But the captain said he was just following orders."

The incident has led to a series of demonstrations here and in other cities, produced conflicting statements by the Coast Guard and the State Department, and raised questions over a possible United States violation of the Geneva Convention protocol on political asylum.

About 100 demonstrators gathered in Times Square yesterday to protest what they called the denial of political

asylum to the seaman and the violation by the United States of his human rights under the protocol, to which the United States is a signatory.

The peaceful, two-hour demonstration here, which included picketing and angry speeches, was one of a number of protests staged yesterday and Friday in Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland and Chicago by Americans of Lithuanian, Estonian and Latvian ancestry over the incident at sea.

The demonstrators, many of them wearing black armbands, carried signs reading "Is State Department trading fish for human lives?" and "Russians and Coast Guard

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kill brave Lithuanian sailor."

The two ships had met in Vineyard Sound, in American territorial waters, for a conference on fishing off the Atlantic coast, a subject of continuing Soviet-American controversy.

A spokesman for the State Department yesterday acknowledged that the seaman had been forcibly returned to the 300-foot Soviet ship by crewmen who were allowed aboard the American cutters, a 200-foot-long vessel.

The spokesman said the incident constituted an apparent violation of Article 33 of the Geneva protocol, which governs political asylum, but he added that the State Department had not learned of the case until after the defector had been returned, and thus could take no action.

This was contradicted yesterday, however, by a spokesman for the First Coast Guard District in Boston, which had jurisdiction over the cutter in the authorized but unusual conference with the Russians.

The Coast Guard spokesman said that the decision to return the defector was ordered by the First District commander, Rear Adm. W. B.

but that both the State Department and the Coast Guard commandant in Washington had been apprised of the situation "early in the afternoon of the 23d," the day the incident took place.

Discussions Going On

The spokesman said that "the decision to return the crewman was made in consideration of delicate international discussions which were being carried on regarding fishing problems." He added: "Their progress could have been endangered by any other course of action."

Admiral Ellis was reported yesterday to be recuperating from surgery and could not be reached for comment.

The meeting of ships during which the attempted defection took place was arranged at Soviet suggestion, according to the State Department, to take up the problem of "over-harvesting" the yellow-tail flounder along the North Atlantic coast.

The Russians had suggested that the matter could be dealt with "on the scene," the State Department spokesman added, and thus the Soviet factory ship was invited into United States territorial waters for the meeting, which took place about a mile west of Gay Head on the western tip of Martha's Vineyard.

Sessions Called Cordial

In addition to representatives of the Interior Department's Bureau of Fisheries, principals in the meeting at sea included representatives of fishing interests in New Bedford, Mass., including Robert Brieze, president of the New Bedford Seafood Products Association, and John Burt, an official of the New Bedford Fishermen's Union.

The spokesman for the State Department, which authorized the meeting, described it as an "informal get-together" aboard the Soviet ship, "mainly for the benefit of regional people and fishermen from New Bedford." He added that the sessions were cordial and that there had been "a lot of visiting back and forth" between the Soviet ship and the Coast Guard cutter.

The ships were linked with hawsers and fenders were put over the side to prevent damage to their hulls at about 10:30 that morning. Mr. Brieze, Mr. Burt and the Government officials rode

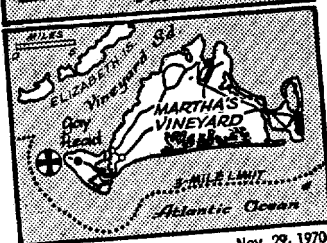
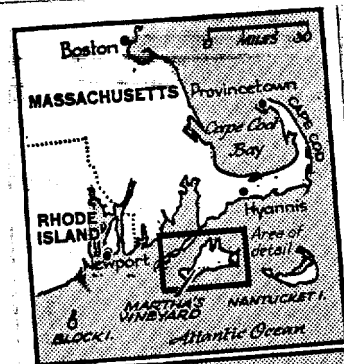
breeches buoys across to the Soviet ship. The conference took place in the Russian captain's quarters, according to Mr. Brieze.

Officer Is Approached

Shortly before 2 P.M., Mr. Brieze said, the Lithuanian quietly approached one of the Vigilant's officers and told of his plan to defect. No action was taken on the information.

Ten minutes later the seaman leaped across the space between the ships and tumbled onto the deck of the cutter. He carried various papers, letters, his wife's photograph and his passport, all of which were taken by the Coast Guardsmen, Mr. Brieze said when reached by telephone yesterday at his home in New Bedford.

"He is known to have two children," Mr. Brieze said. "He speaks English, German,



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Scene of incident (cross)

Russian and Spanish as well as Lithuanian. All the communication with the Americans was in English."

Mr. Brieze said that when the Russian learned of the defection, they asked permission to speak to Simas. A flurry of radio communications followed between the ship and the First Coast Guard District in Boston, which says it notified the Coast Guard commandant in Washington. The commandant, in turn, notified the State Department, according to the First District spokesman.

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No Overt Act Made

The Americans aboard the Soviet ship returned to the cutter at about 3:30 P.M., according to Mr. Brieze, and no attempt was made by the Russians to detain them.

Several hours later, after nightfall, the cutter's commander, Capt. Ralph E. Eustis, received Admiral Ellis's order to return the Lithuanian, and four Russian seamen were granted permission to come aboard to take him back.

"Simas pleaded with [the Americans] to let him stay," Mr. Brieze said. "He was crying 'help,' and was on his knees praying and begging them to save his life. But the captain said he was just following orders."

The Russians seized Simas just outside Captain Eustis's quarters aboard the cutter, Mr. Brieze said, and "beat him all up." Bloody from the beatings, in which the Americans did not interfere, Mr. Brieze said, Simas nevertheless broke free and ran up on deck.

In the darkness, it was believed that Simas had jumped overboard. Actually, he had hidden himself in the cutter's recesses, Mr. Brieze said.

Beaten Unconscious

Though the Russian seamen were still abroad, Captain Eustis drew the cutter away from the Soviet ship. Later, at about 11:30 P.M., the Russians found Simas and, according to Mr. Brieze, bound him hand and foot and kicked and beat him until he was unconscious.

The Russians, at their own request, were then lowered with their prisoner and two American seamen in one of the cutter's lifeboats and returned to the Soviet ship, Mr. Brieze said.

"During all this time, not a single American sailor or civilian went to Simas' aid, even though all said what they had seen was against their grain," Mr. Brieze added.

The State Department spokesman who was asked about the incident yesterday said that, had the department been apprised of the case in time, it probably would have asked the Coast Guard to handle it differently.

The United States policy, the spokesman said, was to grant asylum to persons from Communist-bloc countries "who manage to make it into our hands."

Government Assailed

Thomas Kezys, chairman of the Ad Hoc Lithuanian-American Action Committee, which was formed last week to protest the handling of the incident, said the demonstrations had been organized after repeated appeals for information by telephone and telegram had been ignored by the State Department.

"We wish to draw public attention to this outrageous decision," he said.

The Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have been part of the Soviet Union since 1940, when they were annexed, except for a time during World War II

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Defector to U.S. Redefects to Soviet

By Dusko Doder

Washington Post Staff Writer

A Soviet intelligence officer who defected to the United States in October suddenly changed his mind last week and returned to Moscow Sunday night, the State Department announced yesterday.

The defector had been living in the Washington area with an American official as escort when he apparently redefected to the Soviet Embassy on Dec. 23.

U.S. officials could not recall another instance of a Soviet intelligence defector seeking return to the Soviet Union. Defection is regarded as treason under Soviet law and carries a maximum penalty of death.

Circumstances surrounding the incident raised some speculation here that the defector could possibly have been a "plant" to confuse U.S. intelligence specialists.

But State Department spokesman Charles Bray maintained that "there is absolutely no suggestion whatever from any aspect of this case that he was a plant."

The defector, military intelligence Maj. Anatoly K. Chebotarev, walked into the U.S. embassy in Brussels on Oct. 3 seeking political asylum.

The Belgian government announced subsequently that he had handed over a list of 37 Soviet officials acting as spies in Belgium. A Belgian embassy spokesman in Washington said yesterday that most of them had been declared persona non grata and sent home without fanfare.

That episode followed a highly publicized one only four weeks earlier in which the defection of another Soviet intelligence officer, Oleg

Lyalin, led to the expulsion of 105 Soviet officials from Britain.

Chebotarev was serving as an engineer at the Soviet trade mission in Brussels.

Chebotarev was flown to the United States on Oct. 7 and is said to have had a series of sessions with U.S. intelligence experts.

While living here with an escort, Chebotarev agreed to meet with Minister Councilor Yuli M. Vorontsov, No. 2 man at the Soviet embassy, on Dec. 21. In the presence of State Department officials, he informed the Soviet diplomat that he came to the United States of his own free will, U.S. sources said.

During this brief meeting, Vorontsov handed to Chebotarev several pieces of correspondence from his relatives in the Soviet Union.

U.S. officials said that two days later, on Dec. 23, Chebotarev left his secret apartment around 7:30 p.m., telling his escort he was going for a walk around the building. He did not return.

The next day, Vorontsov informed Richard T. Davies, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, that Chebotarev was at the Soviet Embassy asking to be returned to his family in the Soviet Union.

Vorontsov asked for U.S. "cooperation" and American officials set a hearing for the defector before an inspector of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service "to give Chebotarev an adequate opportunity to give us some kind of signal" whether he voluntarily sought to return to the Soviet Union.

Chebotarev was taken by Soviet official to the John F.

Kennedy Airport in New York where the hearing was held in the presence of five U.S. officials.

Bray said the U.S. inspector "having questioned Chebotarev closely, reached the conclusion that he was acting of his own free will."

Bray said the 45-minute hearing made it clear that the 38-year-old Chebotarev was not acting under duress. He departed for Moscow Sunday night aboard a plane of the Soviet state airlines Aeroflot.

Bray said Chebotarev was jovial prior to his departure for Moscow, laughing and jok-

ing with Soviet officials at the airport.

Officials here declined to speculate on the motives of the October defection and the redefection now. Chebotarev's wife and two children are in the Soviet Union.

The officials also declined to discuss what information Chebotarev may have supplied to U.S. intelligence.

After his redefection, however, these officials said they would take another hard look at the information he provided to ascertain whether he came here to confuse the U.S. intelligence apparatus.

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An Agent Who Defected to U.S. Goes Back to Soviet

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27 — A Soviet intelligence agent who defected to the United States in October returned to the Soviet Union last night after ending his American escorting officer, the State Department announced today.

Charles W. Bray 3d, the department spokesman, said that the agent was Anatoly K. Chebotarev, a former major in the Soviet military intelligence, known as GRU. Mr. Bray said Mr. Chebotarev had left his secret Washington area hiding place on Dec. 23 and the next day was reported in the Soviet Embassy by Yuli M. Vorontsev, the Soviet chargé d'affaires. Mr. Vorontsev said that Mr. Chebotarev wanted to return known as G.R.U. Mr. Bray said

An Immigration and Naturalization Service officer interrogated him at Kennedy International Airport in New York last night, in the presence of State Department officers, and a doctor. The interrogator said that he was convinced that the man wanted to go back to the Soviet Union of his own volition, and allowed him to de-

part aboard an Aeroflot plane to Moscow.

"We are convinced he returned on his own free will," Mr. Bray said. "We think he was a genuine defector who changed his mind."

May Face Death Sentence

If Mr. Chebotarev were a genuine defector he would face treason charges and a possible death sentence on his return to Moscow.

It was disclosed here that Mr. Chebotarev had "cooperated" with Central Intelligence Agency interrogators after he was flown to the United States on Oct. 7.

That was four days after he walked into the United States Embassy in Brussels and asked for help in getting to the United States.

His defection came several weeks after Oleg Lyafin, an agent for the K.G.B., the Soviet civilian security agency, defected in London and provided information leading to the expulsion of 105 Soviet representatives in Britain.

Mr. Bray said that Mr. Chebotarev was officially attached

to the Soviet trade mission in Brussels as an engineer, but "was in reality a Soviet major in military intelligence."

After being flown to the United States, Mr. Chebotarev "cooperated fully" with his interrogators, "at his own request," it was said.

He was living in "a Washington area apartment," Mr. Bray said, with a male escort officer, presumably from the C.I.A.

On Dec. 21, at the request of the Soviet Embassy here, and with Mr. Chebotarev's agreement, a meeting was arranged at the State Department between Mr. Chebotarev and Mr. Vorontsev, Mr. Bray said.

Gets News From Family

At that meeting, attended by two State Department officers, Mr. Vorontsev gave to Mr. Chebotarev "a number of pieces of correspondence from his family," Mr. Bray said. Mr. Chebotarev, who is 38 years old, is married and has children.

"At that time, Mr. Chebotarev told Vorontsev that he had come to the United States on his own free will and had no desire to return to the Soviet Union," Mr. Bray said.

Then, at 7:30 P.M. last Thurs-

day, Mr. Chebotarev left his apartment, telling his escort officer that he was planning to walk around the apartment house, as he had previously done, Mr. Bray said.

He did not return to the apartment that night.

Friday afternoon Mr. Bray said, Mr. Vorontsev telephoned Richard T. Davies, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, and informed him that the Soviet Government wanted the cooperation of the American Government in the return of Mr. Chebotarev to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Bray said that Mr. Vorontsev had told Mr. Davies that the defector was in the Soviet Embassy and had told embassy officials of his desire to return to his family and home.

Following "careful consideration" within the United States Government, Mr. Bray said, Mr. Vorontsev was informed that because Mr. Chebotarev was a "parolee," whose status had to be determined by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, that agency had to decide his final status and whether he could return to the Soviet Union.